OPINION theJohnsonian

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Grad school is about more than test scores

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Grad school. Two words that tell some graduating seniors a few things. One, it's not over yet and two, more student loans.

But, there are reasons that students jump into grad school. Some want the challenge. Others are lost without school and just want to learn as much as possible.

For me, well, I'm a little lost without grad school. My decision to give up being a public school teacher didn't erase from me the enjoyment of watching others shine and learn. I just have to move up a little higher to achieve my dreams and goals now.

It wasn't all that surprising to find out that applying to grad school was a lot like applying to undergrad.

Yet, it still burns me up inside to know that aside from my application, resume, and other materials (depending on your grad program) yet another standardized test is supposed to tell strangers everything they need to know about me and my intelligence.

When I was applying for an undergraduate college degree, I had to take either the SATs or the ACTs (both for some students). Same stuff, different year. This time, the name given the standardized test for grad school is the GRE. It stands for "Graduate Record Examinations."

I thought I was done with the standardized testing. I thought once coming to college that I could finally actually start my real learning.

I'm not the only one who has questioned the necessity of the GRE because there are programs throughout the United States that don't require the GRE in order to get into grad school.

Those that still take the GRE and apply for schools who don't require it are considered competitive and I think anyone who likes the challenge should go for it.

The GRE is used to analyze critical thinking, writing, verbal reasoning, and quantitative reasoning skills, which Winthrop teaches in spades. Many universities require students to take GRE subject tests which are tailored to the subject they will likely be studying in grad school. But, GRE scores are only kept on file for about five years. (With the rapidly changing coursework and new developments in education and everything else, I can understand why).

Sometimes, if a student has several years of experience in the field they will be studying for (and evidence to prove that) as well as some outstanding recommendations, they may be exempt from taking and applying GRE scores to their application in select universities.

That seems fair.

For other programs such as MFA (Masters in Fine Arts) in creative writing programs, published authors (people or potential students with experience in their field) can often be exempt from having to take the GRE.

> It's about seeking out more for yourself. It's about falling headfirst into a passion that you want to succeed at.

I think one of my major problems with major standardized tests like SATs or the GRE is how much they can cost. Sure, there are ways for some students to have fees waived. But, not all students.

If a student can't afford to take the test and the fees can't be waived because records show that they "should" be able to pay for it based upon their economic status, it's unfair to them.

I believe that the reality of economic status is often different from what can be and is put down on paper (this can go both ways).

Even though I absolutely can't stand standardized testing because of the anxiety it perpetuates and the overall generalizing of what is considered intelligent, I understand that to suggest that all standardized testing should be done away with just wouldn't go over well.

We, in our society and in our education, are dependent on it. At least, for now we are.

Personally, the only thing I want to see come to fruition isn't the destruction of standardized tests like the GRE. No. I just don't want people - universities and students - to put so much stock in standardized test scores.

I don't believe that one generalized test should hold so much weight in being accepted into grad school. I want other students going into grad school to know that you're more than just a number on a page.

Pursuing a higher degree is about more than numbers and scores on tests. It's about seeking out more for yourself.

It's about falling headfirst into a passion that you want to succeed at.

It's about loving something so much - whether it's math, English or science - that when you dive, it doesn't even feel like falling.

US women's soccer attempts to score goal against wage gap

Women deserve equal treatment on and off the field

Hannah Strong
Staff Writer

It's no new issue that working women face a wage gap, making between 25 and 45 percent less than men make. But recently several women - in a male dominated environment - have taken a stand against unfair pay.

Five U.S. women's soccer players have filed a wage discrimination action with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against the U.S. Soccer Foundation.

The five players reported they earned 40 percent last year of what players on the men's team earned, which is less than the national average.

Since 1999, the women's team has held a better record in World Cup and Olympic wins compared to the men's team. So, why is a mediocre team being paid more than a team who continuously proves their worth?

There is one large reason why. 20 individuals make up the U.S. Soccer Foundation board of directors, 17 men and three women.

Men dominate this foundation, much like many in the U.S. It creates a glass ceiling; therefore, because men are the majority, there is more of a focus on the men's team.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is specific to workplace discrimination. It's against the law for employers to pay an individual less on the basis of color, race, sex, religion or national origin.

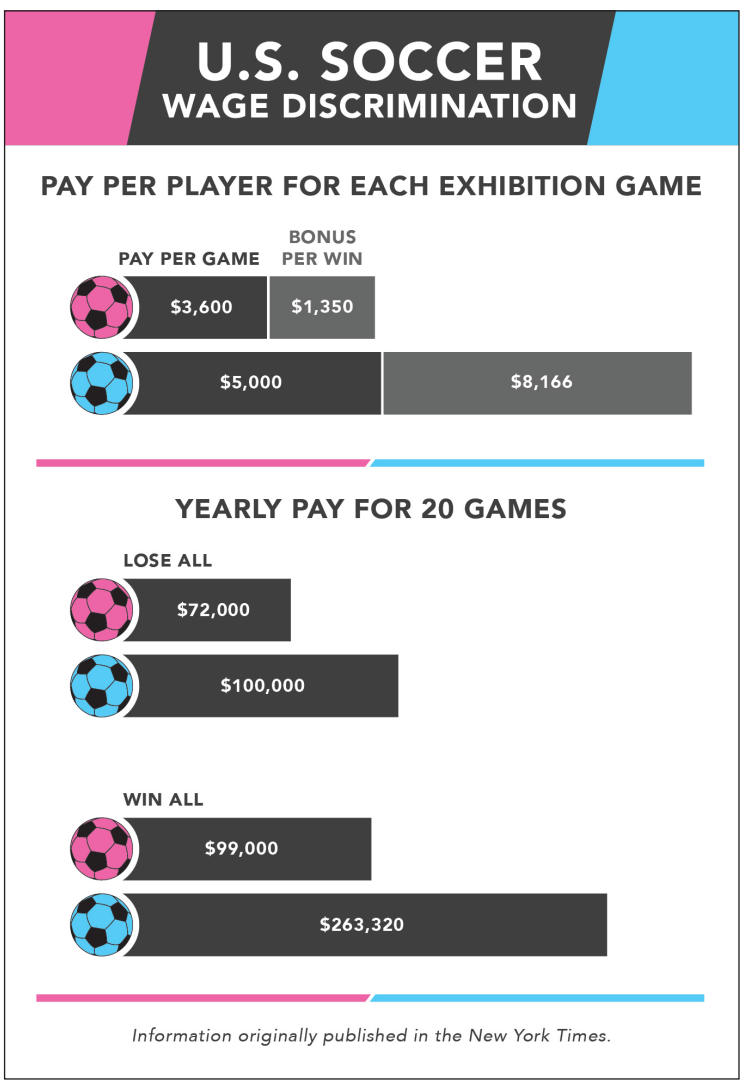
Of course they wouldn't admit this is what they are doing, but it's exactly what they are doing.

There is this absurd belief in our society that women can't do what men do and certainly can't do it as well.

It doesn't make sense that women playing the same sport, frankly better than the men's team, are being paid less than the male players.

If these acts of discrimination were made illegal in 1964, they should not have continued into the 21st century. Since this unfair concept has continued, it's creating a cycle for men to keep having power and leaves little, if no room, for women to break the glass ceiling.

It's time for men to step aside and let women have the spotlight because ultimately women are the ones who will balance out this unequal issue.



Althea Holenko / The Johnsonian

About The Johnsonian

The Johnsonian is the weekly student newspaper of Winthrop University.

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